

# Athletic Recruitment

A guide for Field Hockey Players and their parents



## INTRODUCTION

At Lone Star we believe that playing Field Hockey is first and foremost about enjoying the game, being competitive and sharing the bonding experience that sport provides. We do however recognize that many of our players wish to continue playing when they go to College or indeed want to use their skills in Field Hockey to help them achieve the College of their dreams. We want to help your daughter achieve her college goals and it's important to understand that for most players getting recruited is a process that can take the full 4 years of High School to succeed. Living in Texas makes that process slightly different than it would be if you were living in the Northeast or even just closer to a university that has field hockey. This guide aims to assist with recruiting by explaining the process and the rules, the differences between divisions and by providing advice and templates to assist communication.

We wish to acknowledge several sources in putting this guide together including [www.txfieldhockey.com](http://www.txfieldhockey.com), NFHCA, Clarence Jennelle, Una Murdoch and other parents who have travelled the path you are now considering.

## **Table of Contents**

Freshman Year	3
Sophomore Year	4
Junior Year	5
Senior Year	7
Questionnaire to help pick a school	9
Division Differences	11
The Scholarship Puzzle	12
Dates of Importance Division I	13
Questions to ask coaches	14
Email Template:	16
Player Profile Template:	17
Do's and Don'ts for Parents	18
Offers	19
Calendar of National Showcase Tournaments/Events	21

## Freshman Year

### Things to do the summer before Freshman Year:

- Create a list of schools you are interested in
  - Make it broad, up to 25 - 30 schools you are potentially interested in
  - List all the schools that offer what you think your major may be and some that might be a bit broader (in case you change your mind)
  - Research the hockey program of each school to see if it is a likely fit to your hockey skills & playing aspirations.
  - Take into account the financial & educational match of each school.
  - Start attending camps or clinics of your top choices
  - This starts building relationships as well as allowing you to see which campuses you like and indeed which coaches you gel with
- Email schools at least 5 days prior to an event (always include your graduation year in communications)
  - This includes Tournaments, Camps or Clinics – let them know when you are playing, what your jersey number is and ideally provide an exact schedule inviting them to come watch you
  - Remember that DI coaches cannot respond directly to you until Junior Year
- When you receive Questionnaire requests from the school - Fill them out right away, not 6 months later
- If you have been identified through the National Futures Championship, this process may move quicker than expected
- Focus on developing into the best player you can possibly become and play in as many travel events particularly on Turf as you can. (Nothing beats turf and tournament time)

## Sophomore Year

### Just Starting the Process:

- Create a list of schools you are interested in
  - Make it broad, up to 25 - 30 schools you are potentially interested in
  - List all of the schools that offer your major and some that might be a bit broader (in case you change your mind)
  - Research the hockey program of each school to see if it is a likely fit to your hockey skills & playing aspirations.
  - Take into account the financial & educational match of each school.

### Continuing the Recruiting Process:

- Attend Summer Camps of your top choices
  - This builds relationships as well as allowing you to see which campuses you like and indeed which coaches you gel with
  - Be sure to email them prior to attending indicating your interest in their program, even if you have emailed them 10 times prior.
- Email schools at least 5 days prior to an event (always include your graduation year in communications)
  - Tournaments, Camps or Clinics let them know when you are playing, what your number is and ideally provide an exact schedule inviting them to come watch you
  - Remember that DI Coaches cannot respond directly to you until Junior Year.
- Fill out all of the Athletic Recruit Questionnaires on the University athletic websites to get into their system
- If your Club/ HS coach forwards an email to you from a college coach, email ASAP.
  - Even if you are unsure of how much you like a school, respond politely and do not rule any schools out at this stage.
- If you have been identified through the National Futures Championship, this process may move quicker than expected
- Focus on developing into the best player you can possibly become and play in as many travel events particularly on Turf as you can. (Nothing beats turf and tournament time)
- Sophomore PSAT scores can be used as indicator of academic fit for a school, but taking an ACT/SAT early in Sophomore year is recommended if pursuing DI recruitment.

## Junior Year

### Just Starting the Process:

- Create a list of schools you are interested in
  - Make it broad, up to 25 - 30 schools you are potentially interested in
  - List all the schools that offer your major and some that might be a bit broader (in case you change your mind)
  - Remember if you decide you want to play in your junior year, most Division I and II have likely offered spots and therefore you should also look into Division III schools.
  - Research the Division III hockey programs to see if they are a likely fit to your hockey skills & playing aspirations. Take into account the financial & educational match.

### Continuing the Recruiting Process:

- Division I:
  - Target and attend select university camps, between your sophomore and junior year, that you are either interested in or have expressed interest in you.
    - Prior to attending these camps, make sure to email at least a week in advance indicating your interest level.
    - While at camp, **play your hardest and best**, even if you are put in a “bad” group or are told to play a position you don’t normally play.
  - **\*\*SEPTEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup>\*\*** of your junior year
    - This is the first day a Division I college coach can contact you directly
    - As of April 2018, this is also the first date that Division I coaches can invite on either an official or unofficial visit.
    - Email the schools that you are interested in reiterating your interest level, 3-7 days prior to September 1<sup>st</sup>.
    - If you hear from a school after September 1<sup>st</sup>, they are probably making contact to invite you for an unofficial/official visit, to discuss attending a clinic or to inform you of where you are on their recruiting board.
    - Be respectful and open-minded to all the emails you receive, and please **MAKE SURE TO RESPOND TO ALL**.
    - When invited to go on visits, schedule them appropriately, and create a list of questions to ask the coach.
- Division III:
  - The summer between your sophomore year and junior is when relationship building really starts
    - Pick three or four of your top schools and go to all of their summer camps

- During the year, email those coaches before every tournament you attend
- Attend Prospect Spring Clinics during your junior year
- Attend Summer Camps the summer between junior and senior year
  - While at camp, play your hardest and best, even if you are put in a “bad” group or are told to play a position you don’t normally play.
  - At the end of camp, stand in the line to talk to the coach, expressing interest and asking where you are on their recruiting board and what to work on.
    - Coaches will usually offer spots during these camps.
    - They will also want to get a read on you academically to see if your grades and scores are good enough to get into the school.

## Senior Year

### Continuing the Recruiting Process:

- By now, hopefully you have narrowed down your choices or are committed
- There are no restrictions for you or the coach so they can call or text you
- If you are deciding between two or three schools:
  - Go on an unofficial visit
    - Stay with the team and go to classes to really determine if that's the right school for you
  - Once you decide which one you are interested, tell the coach by phone call, email, or in person
- Applying to school:
  - After you are committed to school, Division I - Division III, you need to actually apply to the school!
    - Most coaches will tell you to apply Early Decision (ED)
    - Division I
      - If you are going to an Ivy, you will be applying ED and before you receive your acceptance letter in the winter, you will receive a "Likely" letter letting you know you are in the school.
      - If you are going to a non-Ivy DI, you will have a signing day if you are getting any scholarship money
    - Division III
      - If you are committed, the coach will request that you apply early decision
      - Once you apply, you are either a "push" player or essentially applying normally
        - A "push" player is a player who the coach either really wants or does not have the grades to get in to the school on her own
          - This player will still apply early but they have the support of the coach and the admissions understand the coaches desire
        - Every other player applying is still flagged as an athlete and put into a separate pile, and the coach usually picks these players based on their high academics, which means you are also set to get in
- Once you are officially in:
  - Congrats! You made it! All the hard work you put in has now paid off
  - All you now need to focus on is improving your skills and getting in peak shape before your college season
- Summer before college:
  - Follow your workout packet given to you by your coach

- Try to attend their summer camp in order to play with the other incoming freshmen and to be able to play in front of your coach before you head up there
- Walk-Ons
  - If you have not been recruited you can still try out as a Walk-On after you have been admitted to the school (many Division I schools no longer take walk-ons so do your research).
  - The summer before entering college, you can email the coach and express interest in walking on to their program
  - Typically you try out during Preseason
- Good Luck!

## Questionnaire to help pick a school

Create a list of schools that you may be interested in. To do this, answer the questions below to identify location, academic fit, hockey fit, weather type, etc.

### Grades & Test Scores

- Above a 3.5 GPA, 30 on ACT or 1410 SAT (new)
  - Can likely get into academically challenging schools and Ivy league type institutions
- Below a 3.5 GPA, 30 on ACT or 1410 SAT (new)
  - Look at more state schools or smaller private schools
- Grey Area
  - There is a line with every institution as to whom they can accept and whom they cannot. This is determined mostly by your ability on the field and how much they want you to be a part of their team. This can be pretty challenging to decipher, but keep a broad list so you have options if the academically challenging schools don't work out.

### Type of Academics

- Medium - Hard - Tough - Ivy
  - Medium school examples: Central Michigan, Missouri State, Longwood,
  - Hard School examples: Louisville, UConn, UNC, Maryland
  - Tough School examples: UVA, Duke, Northwestern, Sewanee, W&L, Rhodes
  - Top Academic Institutions examples: Stanford, Harvard, Amherst, Tufts, MIT, Johns Hopkins
- Grey Area
  - Most people identify a range they are interested in and research those schools

### Major

- Select General Majors that you would be interested in or not interested.
  - Example: Liberal Arts, Business, Sciences, Engineering
- Many schools have lots of majors, but some smaller schools specialize in a few

### Size

- X Small (< 2,000 students)
- Small (2,000 - 10,000 student)
- Medium (10,000 - 20,000 students)
- Large (20,000 - 30,000 students)
- X Large (30,000 + students)

### Weather

- Warm (CA, NC, VA)

- Slightly Cold (MD, PA, OH, KY, IN, MO, AK, TN, DE, NJ)
- Cold (NY, MI, IL, CT, RI, MA, NH, VT, ME)

### Type of Environment

- City (ex. Columbia, BU)
- Suburb (ex. Maryland, UNC, BC)
- Small Town (ex. UVA, Wake Forest, W&L)
- Country (ex. Colgate, Dartmouth, Middlebury, Sewanee)

### Division of Hockey

- Only Division 1
- Primarily Division 1/ Some Division 3
- Primarily Division 3/ Some Division 1
- Only Division 3

After you identify what schools you are interested in, then create a spreadsheet to help track your emails and whether you hear back from the schools. To get a head start, look up the coaches' names and email addresses on the school's website. It is best to place this information on a Google Sheet if you wish to share it with your high school or club coach for advice.

## Division Differences

*The difference in commitment levels for Divisions I, II, and III*

### Division I

- Fall Season
  - 40 hours a week of hockey commitments
  - Games or practice six days a week
  - Conditioning and strength training at least every other day
  - Video analysis time
- Spring Season
  - 8 weeks of spring season
  - 20 hours a week
  - 5 competition weekends
  - Conditioning and strength training
  - **Ivy League conference has different rules**
- Summer Season
  - Yes, this exists
  - Training on your own at home or with your team at school
  - Coach at your school's summer camp and play during it

### Division II

- Fall Season
  - 40 hours a week of hockey commitments
  - Games or practice six days a week
  - Conditioning and strength training at least every other day
  - Video analysis time
- Spring Season
  - Coaching restricted
  - Strength and conditioning training with captains and strength coach
  - Captain's practices and scrimmages
  - 5 weeks of a modified season
  - 2 or 3 competition weekends
- Summer Season
  - Yes, this exists
  - Training on your own at home or with your team at school
  - Coach at your school's summer camp and play during it

### Division III

- Fall Season of Top 20 DIII's
  - 40 hours a week of hockey commitments
  - Games or practice six days a week
  - Conditioning and strength training at least every other day
  - Video analysis time

- Spring Season
  - Coaching restricted
  - Strength and conditioning training with captains and strength coach
  - Captain's practices and scrimmages
  - 5 weeks of a modified season
  - 2 or 3 competition weekends
  - **NESCAC conference has different rules**
- Summer Season
  - Yes, this exists
  - Training on your own at home or with your team at school
  - Coach at your school's summer camp and play during it

## The Scholarship Puzzle

Field Hockey is an Equivalency Sport which means scholarships may be divided up.

- Division I = 79 Programs each with 12 Total (100%) Scholarships per program available. This typically equates to 3 full scholarships per recruiting class and these can be handed out as either a whole scholarship or a % scholarship spread across more players (more typical).
- Note - there are no sports scholarships at IVY LEAGUE universities
- Division II = 34 Programs each with 6.3 Total (100%) Scholarships per program => ~1.6 full scholarships per recruiting class.
- Division III = 165 Programs - no scholarships

## Dates of Importance Division I

### Prior to September 1<sup>st</sup> (Junior Year)

- Coaches can send camp/clinic emails, athletic recruit questionnaires, and NCAA “September 1<sup>st</sup>” rule emails to a player.
- Coaches can pick up the phone if a player calls them (typically best if pre-arranged through a club or school coach).
- Players can email the coaches as frequently as desired. But college coaches cannot answer you specifically; however, college coaches can send information to your high school and club coaches who can then forward the information onto you.
- Coaches cannot talk to players about recruitment at tournaments or at college camps/clinics.
- Players can “visit” institutions, but the university cannot pay for visit.

### Post September 1<sup>st</sup> (Junior Year)

- Coaches can make phone calls to players
- Coaches can text players
- Coaches can email players

### Signing Period

- November 11<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> of a player’s Senior year
- April 13<sup>th</sup> - August 1<sup>st</sup> of a player’s Senior year

## Questions to ask coaches

*A list of questions to pull from when either making a visit or attempting to find out more information regarding a coach and a program. Depending on where you are in the recruiting process, some of the questions will be more appropriate to ask than others.*

- What are the admission requirements for an athlete? (GPA, SAT's, ACT's)
- Will my specific major interfere with the athletic schedule?
- I am interested in \_\_\_\_\_ major, how do you deal with required classes and overlapping practice times during season?
- What are some of the most popular majors for athletes on your team?
- Does your team have a full-time academic advisor?
- Are tutors provided for athletes from the university?
- Do you require players graduate in four years?
- Do you usually redshirt players?
- What are the criteria for redshirting?
- How many foreigners do you like to carry on the team?
- When does your head-coaching contract expire?
- Where has your coaching staff evaluated me?
- Where do I fit on your recruiting board?
- Have you offered scholarships to others in my class? At my position?
- How many players will you be recruiting in my class?
- Where will you be recruiting this Fall/ Winter/ Spring?
- What tournaments/camps do you or asst coaches usually attend?
- What do you expect the girls to do during the summer?
- What is your preseason run/fitness test?
- Do you encourage girls to participate in high performance?
- What does the training program (conditioning & lifting) during the school year consist of?
- What time of day do you usually practice during season? Spring season?
- When does your team lift/conditioning?
- What is your recruiting timeline?
- How many scholarships do you have available for my class?
- Am I under consideration for a scholarship? *(This is a ballsy question to ask)*
- What types of academic scholarships are available? What about other sorts of grants and aid?
- What happens to your athletes if they are on scholarship and get injured?
- Are the players on your team close with each other?
- Do you have an alumni game/event?
- What is the housing situation like? Do teammates typically live together?
- Do most of the girls live on campus or off campus after their freshman year?

- Is it possible to work part-time in addition to playing a sport and studying?  
*(Definitely not during season)*
- Do the girls coach futures locally during the spring?
- Do any of the girls join a sorority?
- What is a typical “day in the life” like for a member of your team during the season? What about during the summer?
- What are the next steps in this process?
- Is there anything I can provide you with that will help you further evaluate me?
- Any advice for future training or improvements in my skill and ability?

*It is better to be prepared for a meeting and have preset questions. Even if you never use any of the questions, most of the people you meet will ask “do you have any questions for me?” It is better to have questions than not.*

## Email Template:

Be sure to include your H.S. Graduation Year in all communication with coaches.

Dear Coach \_\_\_\_\_:

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am a freshman from \_\_\_(city)\_\_\_\_, Texas, graduation year (20XX). I play \_\_\_(position)\_\_\_ for \_\_\_(team)\_\_\_ coached by \_\_\_(coach name)\_\_\_\_. Since attending \_\_\_(recent tournament or event)\_\_\_\_, I have had a successful \_\_\_(grade: e.g. Freshman)\_\_\_ season at \_\_\_(high school)\_\_\_ making the varsity team. I am interested in\_\_\_(College name)\_\_\_ for not only the athletics, but also the academics. Attending private school and taking honors courses, I am looking to challenge myself academically in college. \*\*\*\*\**(Elaborate on what you like about the school specifically)*\*\*\*

Please come watch me play at \_\_\_(tournament)\_\_\_ I wear #\_\_\_ and my team is \_\_\_(Club Team) \_\_\_- \_\_\_(Age Group)\_\_\_- \_\_\_(Specific Pool)\_\_\_.

(List schedule)

Attached is my profile as well as skills and game video. <link to profile>

I hope that you get a chance to see me play. Feel free to contact my coach, (insert coaches name, email and phone number).

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Link Profile)

(Link Video)

## Player Profile Template:

*Your profile can be created online (on club website) or in a Google doc. It should be continually updated throughout the recruitment process. There is no need to pay a 3<sup>rd</sup> party recruitment service to host your Profile.*

<Player Name>, <High School Graduation Year>

<School>

### Field Hockey Accomplishments

<School Team and Club Team accomplishments, Individual Accomplishments, Futures Participation>

### Tournaments

< Regional & National Tournaments attended>

### Camps/Clinics

<List all camps & clinics attended>

### Athletic

Mile Time:

40 Yd Time:

### Academic

<List any significant achievements, if information is online you may not want to put GPA & standardized test scores but you should include this info in your emails to coaches>

### Other Sports

<Other Club and School Sports played>

### Contact Info

<School and Club Coach contact info. List Player contact info for older kids only>

## Recruitspot.com

Players should also create a **Recruitspot.com Profile** and keep it updated.

Recruitspot is free to members of USAFH and automatically links to **Coachpacket**, the recruitment application that most college coaches use. It is very limited in the information you can enter (which is why you will also need the profile above), but you can include Test Scores in Recruitspot (and it is a good way to share these with coaches). One of the key features is that Game Footage from any filmed USAFH games you play in is automatically linked to your Recruitspot Profile and available for college coaches to view.

## Do's and Don'ts for Parents

*Most important advice to remember: THIS IS YOUR DAUGHTER'S PROCESS, NOT YOURS. Besides love and support for them, try to have your daughter talk and email the coaches and you can check the emails over. She is being recruited.... not you. Try to keep that in mind.*

### Do's

- Encourage your daughter and keep her calm. It is important that she doesn't stress too much.
- Encourage your daughter to speak to coaches like an adult.
- Make sure that each email is addressed to the right coach and the right school: no one wants to get an email with their name misspelled or a different name entirely.
- It is always important to have your daughter attend the camps at the schools if she is truly interested. The coach can never truly see how talented she is just by a video or one game at a tournament.
- Make sure your daughter is proactive about being recruited. Almost no one gets recruited just by showing up to a tournament. Make sure she gets her emails and videos out with plenty of time before a tournament.
- The biggest focal point for your daughter is that she plays and enjoys the game. Don't worry about who is watching your daughter and how long they are there for. She should give everything she has 100% of the time regardless of who is watching.

### Don'ts

- Don't call the coaches; let your daughter do it.
- Don't email the coaches, again this is a learning process for your daughter, no coach wants to get an email that is clearly written from an athlete's parent.
- Do not talk to coaches at tournaments, especially when they are sitting watching your daughter's game.
- At camps, let your daughter talk to the coaches unless the coach approaches you as the parent.
- Both parent and player need to put their best foot forward when in proximity of coaches. All coaches will be monitoring your behavior and your daughter's behavior while on campus. What you show them will determine whether or not they want to deal with you and your daughter for four years.
- Do not carry your daughter's stick bag and other gear.
- Do not ask questions for your daughter on the visit; let your daughter ask the questions she wants to ask.



## Offers

### Receiving your offer

- When they are offering you a spot on the team, if you are unsure if they are offering or not, just ask, “Is this an offer?”
  - If it isn’t, no big deal
  - If it is, now you know
- Below describes the different types of offers and what they include
- BE SURE TO CLARIFY WHAT WAS ACTUALLY OFFERED TO YOU

### Division I Offers

- Full Scholarship Offers (100% or full tuition, room, board, books)
  - All of your college expenses are paid for by the university
  - Your housing, meal plan, and books are compensated each semester\*\*
    - Books, housing, and meal plan are sometimes on a stipend basis
  - This is only a one year contract, typically it is renewed, but it does not have to be
- Partial Scholarship Offers
  - Either on a percentage or a dollar amount basis
  - A 75% scholarship typically includes your tuition
  - Similarly 25% includes housing, meals, and books
  - Be sure to clarify with your coach before you accept your offer what your scholarship offer includes
- Roster Spots supported through admissions
  - Receiving no scholarship money
  - You are flagged through admissions as an athlete and supported
  - Family can receive financial aid but they must do it on their own
- Roster spots unsupported through admissions
  - They want you on their team and will save you a spot, but you have to get in on your own
  - You are applying as a regular student among the general student population
- Walk-Ons
  - You are a non-recruited student who applied and got in on your own to school
  - The summer before entering college, you can email the coach and express interest in walking on the their program
  - Typically you try out either at summer camp or in preseason

### Division III Offers

- Roster spots supported by your coach (“push” players)
  - A “push” player is one that the coach either really wants or does not have the grades to get in to the school on her own

- If the coach offers you a supported spot, that means you supported by her through admissions - this is the best offer you can get from a DIII
- Roster spots unsupported by your coach
  - This means that the coach still wants you but you aren't in her top four or recruits or you have good enough grades to get into the school on your own
  - When you apply, you are flagged as an athlete and put into a separate pile, and the coach usually picks these players based on their high academics or if they aren't the top four or five recruits
- Walk-Ons
  - You are a non-recruited student who applied and got in on your own to school
  - The summer before entering college, you can email the coach and express interest in walking on to their program
  - Typically you try out at preseason
- Your freshman year preseason
  - Even if you are accepted and you are a recruited student athlete, most DIII schools hold a try out for all players during preseason
  - This is not to worry you, most times if you are recruited, work hard during the summer, and come in ready to go you will be fine

## Calendar of National Showcase Tournaments/Events

### USAFH

Disney Showcase (FL)– Jan

\*Regional Indoor Qualifiers (IL) - Jan/Feb

National Indoor Tournament (PA)– Feb/Mar (Must qualify)

\*National Hockey Festival (FL) – Nov

### NFHCA

\* Top Recruit Winter Escape (FL)– Jan

Top Recruit Spring Fling (VA) – April

### College Connection

Shooting Stars Thanksgiving Tournament (VA)- Nov

Shooting Stars Easter Tournament (DE) - April

### USAFH Premier Events

\*Regional Futures Tournament (Chicago, Houston or St. Louis)- May

National Futures Championship (PA)– June (must qualify at RFT)

\*Regional Club Championships (Chicago, Houston or St. Louis) - June

National Club Championships (PA) – July (must qualify at RCC)

\* Lone Star FHC Recommended Tournaments/Events